

History was valued by the sixteenth century as a great storehouse of examples, and, therefore, a much better instructor for the gentleman in politics and morals than philosophy.¹ Elyot says that "Cicero, father of the latin eloquence, calleth an historie 'the witnessse of tymes, maister of life, the lyfe of remembrance, of truthe the lyght, and messenger of antiquite!'"² He, himself, thinks that, "In the lernynge of these autors a yonge gentelman shal be taught to note and mark, not only the ordre and elegancie in declaration of the historie, but also the occasion of the warres, the counsailes and preparations on either part, the estimation of the capitaines, the continuance of the batle, the fortune and successe of the holle affaires. Sombably cut of the warres in other dayly affaires, the estate of the publike weale, if hit be prosperous or in decaye, what is the very occasyon of the one or of the other, the forme and maner of the governance thereof, the good and evyll qualittes of them that be rulers, the commodities and good sequels of vertue, the discommodities and evyll conclusion of vicious license."³ Chesterfield in his Letters reviews ancient history for his son and explains the forms of government, characters of various great leaders, and discusses the great practical value of history to one who plans statesmanship. In Letter XVI, he writes, "By the help of history, a young man may, in some measure, acquire the experience of old age. In reading what has been done, he is apprised of what he has to do; and the more he

1. Doctrine of English Gentleman, p 133.

2. The Boke Named the Governour, p 44 ff.

3. op. cit., p 47.